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Employability: identity and student agency

A phenomenological case study

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Background

- Critical appraisal of employability frameworks
- Where does the student fit in?
- What does the student say?
- Does it support emerging student identity?¹

Method and data collection

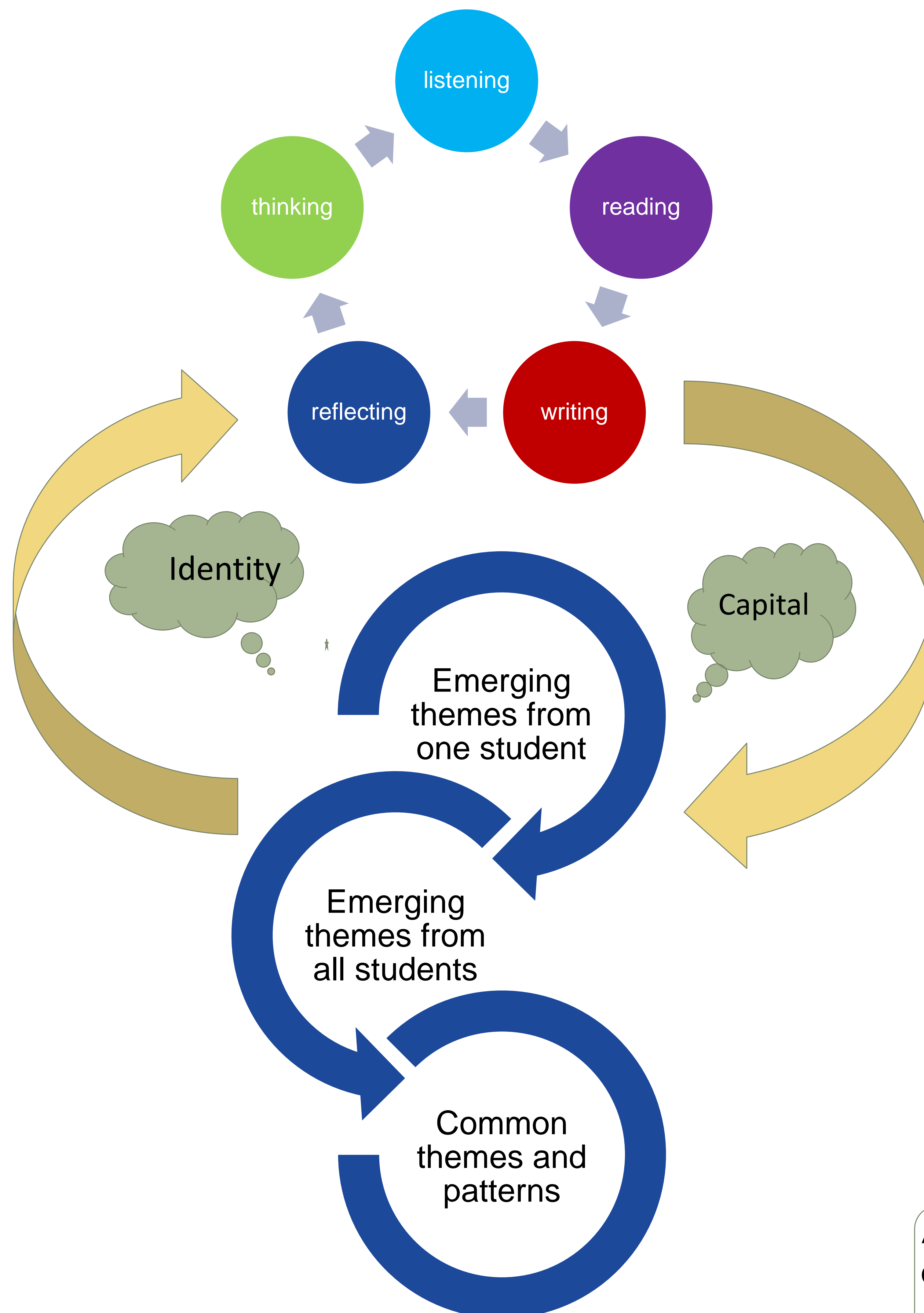
- Phenomenological methodology
- Semi structured interviews
- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)³

Emerging themes

- **Micro:** What do students say about employability – what do they make of it? Can we develop a more sophisticated approach to employability which engages student rather than sees student as an object being made ‘employable’?
- **Meso:** impact on institutional approaches to employability (University, Faculty, Qualification)
- **Macro:** influence debate and direction of employability narrative at national policy level

Research Questions

- What are the effects of engagement with courses where employability has been embedded into the curriculum?
- What are the benefits of engagement with employability over the course of study and beyond?
- How effective is employability in developing different types of capital² to support emerging identities



References

¹ Ibarra, H., and Barbulescu, R. (2010) 'Identity as Narrative: Prevalence, Effectiveness, and Consequences of Narrative Identity Work in Macro Work Role Transitions'. *The Academy of Management Review* 35, no. 1 (2010): 135–54.

² Adler, P., & Seok-Woo Kwon. (2002). Social Capital: Prospects for a New Concept. *The Academy of Management Review*, 27(1), 17-40. Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4134367>

³ Larkin, M, Watts S, and Clifton, E. 'Giving Voice and Making Sense in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis'. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (1 January 2006): 102–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0620a>.

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